



**International Day
of the Deep Seabed**



Madam Secretary General's International Day of the Deep Seabed Message

Upholding the Common Heritage of Humankind: a call for global stewardship of the deep seabed.

Colleagues, friends and citizens of the world,

Before I reflect on the historical origin of this important moment, I must take the opportunity to acknowledge the catastrophic weather event, the category 5 Hurricane Melissa, that unleashed the strongest winds ever to hit the island nation of Jamaica four days ago; our headquarters for the International Seabed Authority. As we rode out the storm together, I felt the weight of having responsibility of our staff and our families. We have made it through safely and I could not be more proud of the courage, kindness and solidarity that my team demonstrated under the greatest pressure. I also want to thank the government of Jamaica for the exceptional organization and preparations that were fundamental to ensuring that more damage was not done and more lives lost in this monster storm. I speak for ISA when I say our hearts go out to the government and people of Jamaica who will now have to start the process of recovery, hand in hand, rebuilding spirits as well as infrastructure. We stand at the ready to support in any way we can. This is our home and we stand together.

On a hopeful front, **today, 1 November 2025**, I am honoured to announce the very first International Day of the Deep Seabed, proposed by the governments of Fiji, Jamaica, Malta and Singapore.

Nearly 60 years ago, on 1 November 1967, Maltese diplomat Arvid Pardo stood before the United Nations and called on humanity to treat the seabed beyond national jurisdiction as *the common heritage of humankind*. His words were visionary.



He urged us to prevent conflict, to protect the oceans for peaceful purposes and to ensure that the wealth of the seabed would serve not just the powerful, but all states, especially the developing ones.

That vision gave birth to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and to the International Seabed Authority. And today, it guides us as we inaugurate this day of reflection, commitment and action.

The deep seabed is one of Earth's last great frontiers. It is home to geological formations and ecosystems millions of years in the making; ecosystems that advances in technology and innovation are helping us to better understand.

Geological processes have led to rich mineral resources that are of interest to human pursuits. But its value is far greater than minerals alone. It is a place of discovery and wonder. A place where life finds a way in extreme conditions of perpetual darkness, high pressure, and near-freezing temperatures.

This frontier belongs not just to us, but to generations yet to come.

The question before us is simple: will we treat the seabed as a shared inheritance, managed wisely and fairly or will we allow short-sighted competition to threaten both equity and the environment?

The International Seabed Authority was created to answer that question. Our mandate is to regulate activities in the Area, to protect the marine environment, to promote marine scientific research and to ensure that benefits are shared by all. In doing so, we act as stewards for humanity.

To deliver this mandate, anchored in the precautionary principle, the deep seabed needs rules and regulations, **now**.

On this first International Day of the Deep Seabed, I invite every Member State and government, every researcher and citizen, and civil society, to join us in:

- building deep-sea literacy
- accelerating investment in deep-sea research, technology and innovation
- and emphasizing the importance of upholding multilateralism, the rule of law and regulatory development to safeguard the common heritage of humankind.

Let us build on these noble foundations and celebrate the vision of Arvid Pardo.



Let us recommit to peace, to equity and to science. And let us remember our moral responsibility to those who will inherit the rich resources of our ocean after we are gone. Together, we can ensure that the deep seabed remains a source of learning, solidarity and hope for all humankind.

Thank you and happy International Day of the Deep Seabed!

Leticia Carvalho
Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority



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